

# Meredith College

## Emergency Action Plan for Athletics

### Athletics

This plan outlines basic steps that should be taken in the event of injury or illness to a participant, coach, official, or spectator present at a Meredith College athletic practice, competition, or the travel to or from such events. It is impossible to address all potential variables surrounding injury and illness. This plan is intended to give individuals a sense of how things should be handled to ensure the prompt delivery of care and to reduce the risk of further harm to the victim(s) or by-standers. The recommendations should be applied to each situation on a case by case basis. The success of any emergency action plan depends upon communication, sensible reactions, and preventive planning.

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## **General Principles of all Emergency Situations**

- If there is a question as to the extent of an athlete's injury or illness, it is best to manage it as though it were severe.
- Movement of any injured athlete occurs only when it has been deemed safe to do so – including that the athlete, bystanders, and caregivers will not be harmed doing so.
- Injuries should be properly immobilized and/or supported prior to any movement, unless it has been determined that there is no risk of further harm as a result of movement making immobilization unnecessary.
- The health and safety of each student-athlete, coach, official, and/or spectator takes precedence over the actual competition if continuation of play is a concern.
- The licensed certified athletic trainer (ATC) should be contacted to manage the situation when he/she is known to be on campus.
- Contact with the (ATC) should be made via cellular phone or messenger if he/she is not already present.
- Determination of the need for emergency care is the responsibility of the ATC or athletic department appointed first aid provider in the absence of the ATC.
- Determination of playing status is the sole responsibility of the ATC under the direction, or in consultation with, a supervising physician. In the absence of the ATC, athletic department first aid providers should request emergency care as needed. All non-emergency injuries should be held and referred to the ATC for evaluation and follow-up care (e.g. sprains, strains, contusions, abrasion, etc). Head or neck injuries, cardiac and breathing emergencies, suspected fractures, or severe sudden illness should receive immediate medical care.
- All athletic department appointed first aid providers must have current certifications in CPR/AED, basic first aid, and blood-borne pathogens as recommended by the NCAA.
- Emergency supplies, crutches, immobilizers, and vacuum splints will be on the home team's sideline during competitions. These items will be centrally located in the athletic training room during practice times.
- Ice, bags, and water should be present at every practice session (indoor as well as outdoor) and on both sidelines during competitions. It is the responsibility of the student-athletes and athletic trainer to provide these services.
- All OSHA recommended supplies for controlling the transmission of blood-borne pathogens will be available on each sideline during competitions.

## **Emergency Facilities and Services:**

The Wake County Public Safety EMS Division covers Meredith College. The closest stations are #4, located behind the DMV office on Blue Ridge Road, and #8 located on Varsity Drive off of Western Blvd. Non-trauma cases will be ground transported to the medical center of choice. The most convenient facilities include:

|                             |                         |          |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Rex Hospital                | 4420 Lake Boone Trail   | 783-3100 |
| Western Wake Medical Center | 1900 Kildaire Farm Road | 233-2300 |
| Raleigh Community Hospital  | 3400 Wake Forest Road   | 954-3000 |
| Wake Medical Center         | 3000 New Bern Avenue    | 250-8000 |

Trauma cases will all be taken to Wake Medical Center or REX Hospital. Examples of trauma would be, but are not limited to, breathing emergencies, cardiac emergencies, head injuries, spinal cord injuries, severe bleeding, and limb threatening injuries. It is highly unlikely that a case would require air transport.

In all cases of medical transport, trauma and non-trauma cases, Meredith College's team physician will be consulted. Decisions regarding facilities, orders, and testing will be first given to the team physician. The team physician should call ahead to the receiving emergency department to alert them of the status of the injured athlete and begin orders if necessary (particularly in cases when EMS transport is not used).

On most non-trauma cases, injured athletes will be transported directly to the office of the team physician located at Cary Orthopedics & Sports Medicine Specialists, Cary Parkway, Cary, NC 27511. This is done to streamline emergency management of less severe musculoskeletal injuries. Services that would be rendered in office, rather than transporting to the emergency department might be, but are not limited to, diagnostic x-rays, minor dislocation reductions, suturing, casting, and immobilization.

## Use of Ambulance Transportation

In the event of an injury and/or illness, the ATC or athletic department appointed first aid provider should manage the situation.

*If an ambulance is required for transport the following steps should be taken:*

1. The ATC or a designated person will contact campus security via cellular phone at 919-760-8888, or use the hall phone located by the pool entrance or fitness center by dialing 8888).
2. Campus Security will make the call for the ambulance. Security will be told “Athletic Emergency at [location]. EMS needed to transport a [age], [gender], [suspected injury].”
3. Campus security will meet the ambulance at the entrance of the college and escort it to the location.
4. Several by-standers will be instructed to help clear the immediate area surrounding the injured athlete (these can be coaches, spectators, or athletes).
5. Additional security officers will be dispatched by campus security to the location and direct the EMS personnel to ensure that all doorways and access points are clear (and unlocked). They should also assist with clearing the scene, controlling the crowd, and directing EMS personnel to the exact location of the injured athlete.
6. It is recommended that the coach and/or assistant coach and/or team captain(s) take the team to the opposite side of the venue or to the team room until EMS has left the scene.

A determination must be made as to who will accompany the athlete to the hospital. If competition continues the coach and athletic trainer should stay at the competition site unless the emergency is deemed life-threatening since the injured is in care of professional medical staff. A Meredith representative may accompany the injured to the hospital. The coach should stay with the team. The injured is in professional hands. This individual must take along the signed Athlete Data Sheet that lists her personal information, contact numbers, insurance, and release for treatment, as well as an Injury Referral Form for the attending physician to complete. The team physician will be contacted once EMS arrives to begin arrangements for medical care. The athletic department representative (coach or ATC) will contact parents as soon as possible regarding the student-athlete’s condition.

In the event that this injury/illness occurs during a competition, all play will be suspended until the athlete can safely be moved and transported by EMS personnel. If it is possible to move the athlete out of the field of play, competition may resume. The decision to move an athlete off the field of play so that the competition may resume will be made by the ATC only.

**Removing an athlete from the gym floor:**

EMS will be directed to the double doors that lead directly into Weatherspoon Gymnasium on the front of the building (south end).

**Removing an athlete from the fitness center:**

EMS will be directed to the back parking lot and through the double doors using the ramp directly into the fitness center on the rear of the building (northwest entrance).

**Removing an athlete from the athletic training room:**

EMS will be directed to the double doors that lead into the lobby closest to Weatherspoon Gymnasium on the front of the building (south end).

**Removing an athlete from the locker room:**

EMS will be directed to the double doors that lead into the lobby closest to the pool on the front of the building (south end).

**Removing an athlete from the pool:**

EMS will be directed to the double doors that lead directly into the pool on the front of the building (south end).

**Removing an athlete from the soccer field:**

EMS will be directed onto the field at the south end (closest to the driving range).

**Removing an athlete from the softball field:**

EMS will be directed onto the field through the double fence gate on the third base line, immediately next to the dugout.

**Removing an athlete from the tennis courts:**

EMS will be directed either between the courts by driving on the turf beyond the softball outfield fencing (if the athlete is on the lower courts) or to the tennis sheds by driving through the back parking lot of Weatherspoon Gymnasium and up onto the turf (if the athlete is on the upper courts). Security must be told upper or lower courts so they can escort EMS to the most appropriate extraction location.

**Non-ambulance Transport:**

In the event of an injury and/or illness the ATC or athletic director appointed first aid provider should manage the situation.

If the ATC is not on-site, he/she must be contacted via cellular phone.

*If an ambulance is not required for transport*, the ATC or athletic department appointed first aid provider should stabilize the injury and prepare the athlete for transport. It is recommended that 2 people accompany the injured athlete. The ATC will contact the team physician to make arrangements for him to evaluate the athlete either at his office in Cary or at an emergency department. If possible, the ATC will accompany the injured athlete to this evaluation. The signed Athlete Data Sheet that lists the athlete's personal information, contact numbers, insurance, and release for treatment, as well as an Injury Referral Form will be sent for the attending physician to complete.

If the injury/illness occurs during the course of competition, the ATC will not leave the venue. Another representative of the athletic department will accompany the athlete. The ATC will contact the parents as soon as the athlete has been evaluated and the physician has given a recommendation for treatment.

### **Non-transport Emergencies:**

In some instances, after an initial evaluation has been done by the ATC or the athletic department appointed first aid provider, injuries may be less severe than originally thought and immediate medical care deemed is not necessary. In these instances, the rules of first aid will be applied. The athlete will have the injury stabilized and a determination of playing will be made. If there is any question as to the extent of an injury, all athletes should be held from activity until they can be evaluated by the ATC. If the ATC is not present when the injury occurs, he/she should be contacted as soon as possible by telephone. A release from the ATC to the coach is required for any athlete to resume activity.

## **Spine & Closed Head Injury/Unconsciousness Management**

The ATC will run the management of any spine or closed head trauma or loss of consciousness. The ATC will retain control over in-line stabilization until the athlete is secured to the EMS spine board. The movement of the athlete will occur on command from the ATC.

Management will proceed in the following order:

1. Assess consciousness.
2. Assess and manage Airway, Breathing, & Circulation.
3. Call for EMS transport – send a by-stander (**DO NOT LEAVE THE VICTIM**) to contact campus security. If the ATC is on-scene, call campus security. EMS can be contacted before security by dialing 9-911 on any campus phone. If this is done, security must be contacted next before returning to the scene and alerted of the emergency situation and the fact that EMS has been called to campus.
4. Establish control of the cervical spine with in-line stabilization until the athlete has been collared and boarded by EMS.\*
5. Assess and monitor signs and symptoms of the injury (e.g. respirations, pulse, color, pupils, temperature, BP, movement, sensation, level of consciousness, memory, etc).
6. Provide first aid to severe extremity injuries (e.g. direct pressure for bleeding, stabilize fractures or dislocation, etc) if there is personnel available that can be instructed in the appropriate care.

\* In the event of a spine or closed head injury or loss of consciousness and the ATC is absent, the athletic department appointed first aid provider will provide cervical stabilization until EMS arrives. This individual should not leave the injured athlete for any reason. He/she should call for emergency help and send teammates to retrieve first aid supplies and make the call to EMS. Control of the c-spine will be transferred to the EMTs as soon as they arrive and they will assume command over the scene. All other management steps should remain

If the ATC is on scene, he/she will obtain in-line stabilization throughout. The ATC will remain in command of movement of the athlete when EMS arrives. In-line stabilization will not be transferred from the ATC to EMS until the athlete is adequately secured with a collar, blocks and spine board.

## Travel Procedures:

In the case of an emergency while traveling to/from an event or during the event, the athlete should be assessed and managed in one of the following ways:

1. ***The injury/illness is deemed a medical emergency requiring ambulance transport or immediate medical attention (fracture, dislocation, illness, etc.).*** In which case a representative of Meredith College will accompany the athlete to the hospital. The athlete's personal, medical, and insurance information will accompany the athlete in the ambulance. If the ATC is present, he/she will accompany the athlete to the hospital, leaving care for the remaining athletes under the supervision of the host ATC. If necessary the ATC will stay behind with the injured athlete, allowing the rest of the team to go home. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. If the ATC is not present, decisions rest upon the coach. An attempt to contact the ATC must be made to be advised as to the most appropriate care (call the office, home, and cell phone).

Examples of injuries that should be seen immediately (this is not an all inclusive list)

- Head trauma
- Suspected spine injuries
- Lacerations and uncontrolled bleeding
- Obvious fractures and dislocations
- Uncontrolled nausea and vomiting
- Severe abdominal cramping associated with fever, nausea, headache, sweating, etc.

2. ***The injury/illness is deemed a non-medical emergency but is restricting activity.*** In which case the ATC or coach must strive to stabilize the injury and offer first aid. The athlete will be transported back to campus and further evaluated. If it is determined at that time that the injury requires medical evaluation, arrangements will be made through the team physician or another physician, as needed. If the ATC is not present, decisions rest upon the coach. An attempt to contact the ATC must be made to be advised as to the most appropriate care (call the office, home, and cell phone).

Examples of injuries that could be seen on campus (this is not all inclusive list)

- Joint sprains
- Muscle strains
- Contusions
- General illness
- Chronic complaints

## **Inclement Weather – Lightning Policy:**

The head athletic trainer will be designated to monitor threatening weather and be the one who makes the decision to remove a team or individuals from the athletic site or event. The decision to clear an area will apply to participants, coaches, officials, and spectators.

From the soccer field, all individuals will be directed toward Weatherspoon Gymnasium. From the softball field, all individuals will be directed toward the cafeteria. From the tennis courts, all individuals will be directed toward Weatherspoon Gymnasium. The storage sheds at each location may be considered in extreme situations as long as the occupants know not to touch the metal sides of the structure.

Clearing an athletic site or event will be done using the flash-to-bang method as suggested by the NCAA. Counting the seconds from the time the lightning is sighted to when the clap of thunder is heard uses this method. The number will then be divided by 5 to determine how far away (in miles) the lightning is occurring. Specific lightning-safety guidelines have been developed with the assistance of the National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) for the NCAA.

1. As a minimum, NSSL staff strongly recommends that by the time the monitor obtains a flash-to-bang count of thirty seconds, all individuals should have left the athletics site and reached a safe structure or location. Athletic events should be suspended and potentially terminated.
2. The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can and does strike from as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. It does not have to be raining for there to be a lightning strike.
3. If no safe structure or location can be reached, consider a thick grove of small trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position with only the balls of your feet touching the ground. Wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Minimize contact with the ground. Avoid metal objects, bleachers, single trees, standing water, and open spaces. Do not lie flat.
4. When considering resumption of play for any athletic event, the NSSL recommends that everyone wait at least 30 minutes after the last sighting of a lightning flash before returning to the field.
5. Those that have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge, thus first aid (CPR) should begin immediately. If possible, the injured parties should be relocated for safety. Victims of lightning strikes will present with signs of cardiac or respiratory arrest and prompt care is necessary to preserve life.

## **Spectator Issues:**

The provision of first aid care for spectators is primarily the responsibility of campus security. However, immediate care will be rendered in life threatening situations by either the ATC or the athletic department appointed first aid provider. In the event of inclement weather, spectators will be advised to seek shelter along with the participants of the event. In the event of a structural emergency (e.g. fire), spectators and participants will be ushered out of the building via the nearest emergency exit by members of the athletic department staff. Security will perform a sweep of the building, if possible, to ensure all occupants have been safely vacated.

## **Visiting Teams:**

Emergency care for visiting teams is the responsibility of the ATC. Prior to the start of any competition the ATC will discuss emergency procedures with the head coach and visiting athletic trainer (if present). All procedures will be the same with regard to ambulance transports, non-ambulance transports, trauma, and non-trauma cases. Any athlete or coach injured while participating in an event on campus will receive medical care from the ATC. In the event that a visiting athlete sustains a minor injury, the coach will be given the option to have that injury evaluated locally or to have the athlete stabilized and transport her back to their campus for evaluation. This option will be made available if there is no risk of further harm to the student-athlete by delaying medical evaluation. A representative of the visiting team must accompany the injured athlete with any personal information (e.g. insurance, contact numbers, address and phone, etc.).

## **Officials:**

Officials will be greeted prior to the start of any competition by the ATC. The emergency procedures of the athletic department will be discussed. Outdoor officials will have the inclement weather/lightning policy reviewed so that they are aware of the chain of command in monitoring an approaching storm front. Event specific procedures for providing emergency care will be discussed. The officials will be told that competition will resume only if it is deemed safe to move an injured athlete from the field of play and that the ATC is the one to make that determination.

Injuries to officials will be handled in a similar manner as injuries to visiting players or coaches. If necessary, a representative of Meredith College's athletic department will accompany an injured official to a medical facility until friends or family members can be contacted.

Coverage of athletic teams based upon classification of contact and strenuousness: [Fu, F.H. & Stone D.A. (1994). Sports Injuries. Williams & Wilkins: Baltimore. P. 11]

| Contact/Collision | Limited Contact/Impact | Noncontact..... |                      |               |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
|                   |                        | Strenuous       | Moderately Strenuous | Non-Strenuous |
| Boxing            | Baseball               | Aerobic dance   | Badminton            | Archery       |
| Field Hockey      | <b>Basketball</b>      | Crew            | Curling              | Golf          |
| Football          | Cycling                | Fencing         | Table tennis         | Riflery       |
| Ice Hockey        | Diving                 | Field           |                      |               |
| Lacrosse          | Field                  | Discus          |                      |               |
| Martial Arts      | High jump              | Javelin         |                      |               |
| Rodeo             | Pole vault             | Shot put        |                      |               |
| <b>Soccer</b>     | Gymnastics             | Running         |                      |               |
| Wrestling         | Horseback              | Swimming        |                      |               |
|                   | Skating                | <b>Tennis</b>   |                      |               |
|                   | Skiing                 | Track           |                      |               |
|                   | <b>Cross-country</b>   | Weight Lifting  |                      |               |
|                   | Downhill               |                 |                      |               |
|                   | Water                  |                 |                      |               |
|                   | <b>Softball</b>        |                 |                      |               |
|                   | Squash, handball       |                 |                      |               |
|                   | <b>Volleyball</b>      |                 |                      |               |

The sports sponsored by Meredith College Athletics are in bold. Sports listed in the two columns to the left will have priority due to the potential risk for injury when there is an overlap in competition times as far as on-site coverage of the ATC. It is the policy of the athletic department that all home competition and practices take precedence over traveling with a team. According to the NCAA, it is the responsibility of the host institution to provide medical coverage to visiting teams. No competition, regardless of contact level, should occur without the on-campus presence of an ATC and in most cases the on-site presence of an ATC.